

REMARKS

This Reply to Office Action is responsive to the Office Action mailed on March 5, 2003. Claims 1-29 are pending in the present Application. Applicants have amended claims 1, 2, 12, 20, 21 and 24, canceled claim 17, and added claims 30 and 31. Accordingly, claims 1-16 and 18-31 are now at issue. Applicants' undersigned attorney appreciates the courtesies extended by Examiner Nguyen during the personal interviews on May 6, 2003, and June 17, 2003.

The Examiner objected to the abstract of the disclosure because it contains more than 150 words. Applicants have rewritten the abstract so as to contain less than 150 words. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the Examiner's objection has been overcome. Moreover, Applicants have amended specification paragraphs [0002], [0004], [0012], [0014], [0015], [0017], [0019], [0022], [0023], [0027], [0028], [0029] and [0030] to correct typographical errors and to provide clarification for the invention.

The Examiner objected to claims 1 and 20, last line, because there is no antecedent basis for "the patch panel frame." Applicants have amended claims 1 and 20 to provide antecedent basis for "the patch panel frame." The Examiner also objected to claim 2 as being unclear. Applicants have amended claims 2 and 21 to recite "the plurality of cable connectors are mounted on the central section." The Examiner further objected to claim 12 as being unclear. Applicants have amended claims 12 and 24 to more clearly define the invention. These amendments are not considered to broaden or narrow the scope of the claims. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the Examiner's claim objections have been overcome.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-5, 12-15 and 20-26 under § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Puetz* (U.S. 5,734,776). The Examiner also rejected claims 6 and 7 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Puetz* in view of *Ott, et al.* (U.S. 5,945,633). The Examiner further rejected

claims 8-11 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Puetz*. The Examiner also rejected claims 16-17 and 28-29 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Puetz* in view of *Bartolutti, et al.* (U.S. 6,350,148). The Examiner further rejected claims 18-19 and 27 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Puetz* in view of *Falkenberg, et al.* (U.S. 6,240,234). Applicants submit that the present invention is patentable over the cited prior art.

Independent claim 1, as amended, recites “each connector having a horizontal axis, the central section includes a separator portion connecting the two angled panel sections to provide clearance for the connectors mounted in the panel sections.” As discussed with Examiner Nguyen during the personal interviews on May 6, 2003 and June 17, 2003, the combination of elements recited in amended claim 1 is patentable over the cited art, taken alone or in combination. Claims 2-16 and 18-19 are asserted to be allowable based on their dependency from allowable claim 1.

Independent claim 20, as amended, recites “each connector having a horizontal axis, the central section includes a separator portion connecting the two angled panel sections to provide clearance for the connectors mounted in the panel section.” For the reasons discussed above regarding claim 1, Applicants submit that amended claim 20 is patentable over the cited prior art, taken alone or in combination. Claims 21-29 are asserted to be allowable based on their dependency from allowable claim 1.

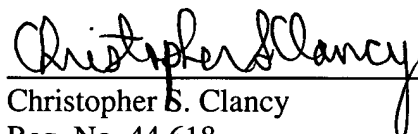
New independent claim 30 recites “a vertical cable manager located adjacent the network rack, wherein the cabling on the front side of the patch panel frame flows substantially horizontally within the predefined height of the patch panel frame to the vertical cable manager.” As discussed with Examiner Nguyen during the personal interviews on May 6, 2003 and June 17, 2003, the combination of elements in claim 30 is patentable over the cited prior art, taken alone or in combination.

New independent claim 31 recites "said connectors having a horizontal axis such that the inverted V-shape of the central section directs said cabling on the front side of the patch panel frame, immediately upon exiting the connectors, horizontally towards a vertical plane that intersects one of the rack mounting plates and is perpendicular to a horizontal axis extending between the rack mounting plates." As discussed with Examiner Nguyen during the personal interviews on May 6, 2003 and June 17, 2003, the combination of elements in claim 31 is patentable over the cited prior art, taken alone or in combination.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that claims 1-16 and 18-31 are allowable and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the \$84.00 fee for a fourth independent claim and the \$18.00 fee for one additional claim to Deposit Account No. 16-0228.

Respectfully submitted,


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